



Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, Is Open and Offers Several Exhibitions

The Sumter County Gallery of Art in Sumter, SC, is still here, and we are excited to open our doors, turn the lights on the art and welcome our friends and patrons back. When we closed abruptly 3 months ago, the two exhibitions we had installed, *The Supper Table* and Maria Brittan's *Dream Bodies* had not even been up for two weeks. We are fortunate that *The Supper Table* and *Dream Bodies* are still in the gallery along with the work of Sumter Artists' Guild Artist of the Month Carole Shoemaker Swartz, and will be up through July 24, 2020. Don't miss this opportunity to see these important exhibitions.



View of "The Supper Table"

The Supper Table exhibition seems especially timely because it honors the legacy of many African American women in South Carolina history who paved the road – through civil rights, medicine, and education – that young people protesting injustice today at Black Lives Matter rallies across South Carolina and the nation are travelling.

On July 30, 2020, we open our most popular exhibition a little late this year, the *Sumter Artists' Guild Exhibition*. We will open the exhibition on July 30 and announce the winners, however out of concern for the safety of our patrons, there will be NO opening reception. The exhibition will remain up through Oct. 16, 2020. We will be observing strict COVID guidelines and limiting capacity.

The Sumter Artists' Guild is one of the best Guilds in the state, led by a core of talented artists, President Laura Cardello, Vice President Erin Duffie, Treasurer Vicki Hagner, Lisa Melton and Jennifer Franklin. This group has been together for several years and provides continuity to the guild as it continues to add new members.

We are excited to have as the 2020 Guild Show judge, Columbia artist Robert O. Keith IV. Keith is a native Coloradan. He received a BFA at Colorado State University and an MFA at the University of South Carolina. Art was an escape for Keith as a child. The poor conditions in which he was raised mirror so many of the abandoned structures shown in his work. His rough upbringing gave him a unique perspective on life, allowing him to find the beauty in what others might find ugly or impossible to endure. Robert explores the reclamation of abandoned architectural spaces by nature. He documents the journey of exploration via oil paintings. He also bends his canvases to literally surround the viewer in the spaces themselves.

Keith's work is an investigation of abandoned architectural spaces that are gradually being reclaimed by nature as well as the illusion of creating a three dimensional image on a two dimensional surface. By combining the two he exposes these spaces in their beautiful collapse. He documents these structures via photos and sketches that result in drawings and paintings that further reflect the uniqueness and feeling of that space. Keith often distorts the piece by curving, stretching as

continued on Page 16

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